

139.  
A  
FUNERAL SERMON,

On the DEATH of  
Miss *Susannah Harbert*,

Aged Twenty-three Years and Three Months ;

Preached on Lord's-Day, May 29, 1785,

By William Augustus Clarke,

At his Meeting-House, in *Red-Cross-Street*.

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*" My Beloved is gone down into his Garden, to the Beds of  
" Spices, to feed in the Gardens, and to gather Lilies,"*

Sol. Songs vi. 2.

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L O N D O N :

Printed by GILBERT and PLUMMER, No. 13,  
Cree-Church-Lane.

M DCC LXXXV.

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FOR THE YEAR 1860

OF THE

BRITISH MUSEUM



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S E R M O N, &c.

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We shall take that portion of Scripture, which was made use of as an instrument, in the hand of Providence, in the conversion of our departed sister, SUSANNAH HARBERT, which you will find in the 2d chapter of *Joshua*, and the last clause of the 12th verse,  
"AND GIVE ME A TRUE TOKEN."

**I**T appears to me to be a duty incumbent on all who are under shepherds in God's Israel, to relate what JESUS CHRIST has done for the souls of those whom he taketh unto himself. I am likewise fully persuaded, that all of you who

who know the grace of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, in sincerity, and have felt the divine efficacy of the precious gospel on your souls, never wish to be considered as any thing in yourselves, well knowing that you are poor helpless creatures, while at the same time you wish to glory and triumph in the wonderful SALVATION which is in CHRIST JESUS! a salvation effected through the labours of his Life, and the precious ATONEMENT which he made by his invaluable death and blood: the comforts of which salvation can only be enjoyed through the sanctifying operations of the DIVINE SPIRIT. I am persuaded that the greatest part of you, who are assembled together at this time, are a people, well acquainted with the word of Inspiration, as such, undoubtedly this narrative, respecting *Rahab the Harlot*, has been under your consideration in a way of useful meditation: There is not a portion in the Holy Scriptures but what may be said with verity, and propriety, to be pregnant with instruction and edification to the VESSELS of MERCY, who are predestinated

destinated to the adoption of children. The most valuable compositions of men are frequently dashed with things, that are by no means profitable to the reader, but in the divine composition, all is a display of the INFINITE WISDOM, and the love of the ETERNAL GOD; hence as one has wisely said, "Revelation is the glorious sphere in which the Lord the Spirit moves and shines," and makes the glorious and precious gospel realities, savory meat to all that he has LOVED with an EVER-LASTING LOVE! and called with an effectual calling out of darkness, into his marvellous light. In the divine word, we have two accounts given us by *Joshua*, concerning the *spies*, which were sent out to take a view of the goodly land of *Canaan*. Those spies which *Moses* sent out, many of them when they returned made a false report concerning the goodly land. The spies sent out by *Joshua*, brought a good account, but the others in making their report, proved instrumental in causing the people to be discouraged, so that they were afraid to go up

up to take possession of the promised land. Now the two spies sent out by *Joshua*, after they had surveyed the land, in their return came to *Jericho*, and were cast, by the wise providence of God, into the house of *Rahab*, the *Harlot*, who kept a kind of an *Hotel*, or lodging house, in order to entertain Travellers. It is obvious to a demonstration, that God moved upon *Rahab*, by some internal influence. Some suppose, that this *Harlot*, was brought under the spirit of prophecy, because she foretold the wonderful things that came to pass: It evidently appears that she ventured her own life in the cause of God, by hiding the spies, contrary to the King's command. After she had hid the spies, she sent their *Pursuers* a contrary way, but not 'till a solemn vow was made by the spies, unto *Rahab*, that when the children of *Israel* should come and take possession of the city of *Jericho*, and of the land of *Canaan*, that she, and her household, should be spared. It is said that her house, was upon the wall of *Jericho*, and the very  
*scarlet*

*Scarlet Line*, which was the instrument of the deliverance of the spies, from the hand of their pursuers, that was to be hung out of the window of *Rabab*, and that was to be her true Token.

Now *Joshua*, and his mighty men of valour, together with the *Priests* of the Lord, were commanded to surround *Jericho*, and to go round the city seven times, blowing their *Trumpets* of *Rams-Horns*, in order, that the wall of *Jericho*, might be brought flat to the ground, and all the *Inhabitants* be put to the sword, save *Rabab* and her family; who were to be saved, because she hid the Messengers whom *Joshua* had sent to spy out the country.

The *scarlet Thread* was to be fastened to the window of *Rabab*; and so it may be viewed as emblematic of the blood of the Lamb, which appears conspicuously glorious, through the window of the *Holy Scriptures*, on the walls of Salvation. I readily acknowledge, that Revelation, abstracted from the operations of the ETERNAL SPIRIT, can never minister comfort to any mourners in Zion, neither  
give

give them to enjoy the consolations, promised in the precious Gospel of Salvation. The HOLY GHOST works by his own composition, as a second Medium, or instrument of the most salutary nature, to all the recipients of covenant grace; hence it may be said, that the Holy Word, is a word of Truth, of Life and of Salvation: I conceive, that there is no necessity for me to dwell any longer on the letter of the word, in order to inform your understanding.

The grand design that I have in view, is to lay before you the true *Token*, or *Tokens* of unfeigned Christianity, or pure Religion; in opposition to those *Tokens* that are fallacious and unfound. For it is the spirituality of the word, the operations of the Divine Spirit, the aboundings of Divine Grace, in and upon the souls of God's people only, that can give them spiritual comfort and divine consolations. *David*, when in the spirit of prayer, said unto his covenant God and Father, give me a true *Token*; and it is evident, to a demonstration, that *David* had  
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had had many a precious and blessed token for good given him from the God of his Salvation, prior to his petition; nevertheless, the children of Christ, who are blessed with a principle of Divine Love, and who have *tasted that the Lord is gracious*, and have found REDEMPTION in the BLOOD of the LAMB, even the forgiveness of their transgressions, yet are they hungering and thirsting after a greater conformity to the glorious image and likeness, of the ever blessed and glorious Redeemer.

I shall now briefly consider, what we may understand by a true *Token*, for this was the *Harlot's* request, whom I view to be a figure of the *Gentile* church. She said "*Give me a true Token.*" I shall cite two or three instances, wherein we see the servants of God solicitous for some true *Tokens*: We find *Gideon*, that mighty man of valour, to whom God, had most wonderfully and graciously appeared, and told him, that he would be with him; yet we find that he prayed, that he might have a true *Token*, viz.

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an evidence of God's being with him, and he prayed that the fleece might be wet, and that the ground might be dry, round about the fleece, and God condescended to grant him his request: Again he prayed, that the *fleece* might be dry, and the ground about it wet; and then he prayed that God would bear with him, and not be displeased, and God granted his request: Now there were two true *Tokens* granted unto *Gideon*, in order to encourage him, that he might go on in the work and ways of the Lord. We likewise find that *Manoab*, the *father* of *Sampson*, was much discouraged, on account of the *Vision*, for he thought he had seen God, and therefore thought that he and his should die; however we find that the *Mother* of *Sampson* was the strongest Believer, for she encouraged *Manoab*, (her doubting husband) and told him, that if the Lord had meant to have destroyed them, he would not have shewed them such things; upon this, they both desired to have the *Vision* repeated, and while they prepared to make ready  
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to entertain the GLORIOUS GUEST, we find that the ANGEL of the Lord descended upon the SACRIFICE, and wrought wonderously, in his ascending up in the flame of the Altar, yet was his name SECRET; but they did not discern that it was the ANGEL OF GOD'S PRESENCE, viz. JEHOVAH JESUS! The Scriptures are silent, concerning the wonderful things which *Manoah* and his wife beheld, while they both looked on, nevertheless I am comfortably persuaded that they had a most precious and glorious view of the GREAT SACRIFICE and ATONEMENT, which the glorious *Antitype*, would make in the fulness of time. But to be more explicit.

True *Tokens* I think imple, that there are many false *Tokens*, which men suppose to be evidences for heaven, which all originate in pride and legality, therefore cannot be true *Tokens*. I shall mention a few instances wherein *Tokens* appear to be of a fallacious nature: What shall we think concerning the conduct of *Judas*, he gave the Jewish rabble to understand that he would give them a *Token*,  
and

and what was it? why it was a true *Token* to them,\* but it was a most awful hypocritical one; when *Judas* saw his *Master*, he said unto him, "*Hail Master, and kissed him;*" there was a false *Token*. And is it not the case with multitudes who profess godliness? there is great reason to fear, that many give *CHRIST* the kiss of profession, but at the same time wound him in the House of his Friends. The bare kiss of profession will never take a soul to heaven, therefore all who come under the awful and dreadful character of *Hypocrites* in *ZION*, may indeed be said to be in a most dreadful and dismal situation. And that there are *Hypocrites* in *Zion*, is obvious from the voice of *REVELATION*. We have also other characters described in the word, whose *Tokens* were of a delusive nature.

Our Lord, informs us, that two Men went up to the *Temple* to pray, the one a *Pharisee*, the other a *Publican*; the one smote upon his breast and said, "*God be merciful to me a Sinner;*" the other vaunting

\* That the person whom *Judas* should kiss, was *Jesus*.

ing himself before the eternal God, under the appearance of sanctity. The *Pharisee*, expressed himself in a way of apparent praise, "God (says he) I thank thee, I am not like unto other men, nor like unto this poor *Publican*." Some suppose that he might use this appellation, not like this poor *Gentile Dog*. Then he began to extol his own doings before the ALMIGHTY: And is it not evident to a demonstration, that this proud *Pharisee's Tokens*, were of a false nature? The other feels himself a *Sinner*, there was conviction, confession followed and humility.

Again, respecting the foolish *Virgins*, I consider them to be a different character from the *Hypocrites* in *ZION*, I view them as strictly moral and sincere, but at the same time, strangers to regenerating mercy; They had not the grace of *JESUS CHRIST* in their hearts, therefore when the cry was made, at midnight, "*Behold the BRIDEGROOM cometh, go ye out to meet him,*" then they were found in a state of nature, and yet it appears, that they had had some *illuminations*, under those

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*ministrations* in which they lived; I do not mean, that they were illuminated by the HOLY GHOST, neither that they were taught by him, for that is an idea, that I never can admit of: Persons being enlightened in theory, under publick ministrations, works conviction\* in the natural conscience of man, and this may operate upon him, so as to make him *circumspectly moral*, and make him in some sense diligent in the outward means, but at the same time, the man may be resting upon a SANDY FOUNDATION.

Hence their supposed light may be altogether darkness: The winding up of the Parable proves that their *Tokens* were not genuine. But my dear Friends, those that are enabled to take up these words, in a way of true prayer, viz. "*And give me a true Token,*" they are such as have been wrought upon by the power of Jehovah the SPIRIT: Now I consider the following to be true *Tokens*, viz. am I taught to feel the sad depravity of my Nature? do I feel that I am vile? and

\* Natural conscience, and the conscience of the new man, I consider to be distinct from each other.

and am I brought into the valley of true humiliation and self abasement? do I find an hatred to all iniquity? and do I count all my righteousness as filthy rags? do I sigh before the Lord, on account of my transgressions? all the preceding are what I call true *Tokens*, becaule such *Tokens* must certainly be effected by the power of the HOLY GHOST! In our fallen *Adam*-nature, we are all perverseness and awful Rebellion, placidly obeying the suggestions, of the great ADVERSARY of our souls, and eager to run into the ways of vanity. Every soul that feels an inward repellent against iniquity, and a disposition to be looking toward JESUS in a way of humble prayer, and feels the working of godly sorrow within, most certainly are BORN OF GOD.

The preceding feelings as much come from the operations of the HOLY GHOST, as JESUS CHRIST came from his father's bosom. Our Lord has said, in that admirable Sermon upon the Mount, on the BEATITUDES, (in which genuine experience is sweetly set forth) "*Blessed are*

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" *they*

"they that mourn, for they shall be comforted." now you see that mourning is a true Token; again, "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after Righteousness, for they shall be filled," There is another true Token, viz. The soul that truly mourns on account of sin, and mourns to be acquainted with JESUS CHRIST, and hungers after spiritual food, and longs to experience the sweetness of standing compleat in the glorious and precious RIGHTEOUSNESS of JESUS CHRIST, such may be said indeed to have received blessed Tokens for good.

Further, there is a true Token spoken of in the *Levitical Law*, where it is said, "If they cry at all unto me, I will surely hear their cry,\*" If we can only cry like the poor Canaanitish woman (who had made her daughter's case her own) "Lord help me," or like *Jeremiah*, who said, "My groanings and my sighs are many," groaning, sighing and crying, I consider to be blessed evidential Tokens for good: Again in *Malachi*, we have an

\* Literally, the law respecting Widows.

an account of God's observation on the conduct of his people, it is said, "*They that feared the LORD, spake often one to another, and the LORD hearkened and heard, and a book of remembrance was written before him.*"

The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and may be said to be the first Token, connected with conviction for sin. The fear of the LORD I consider as an abiding evidential Token of real regeneration. A filial fear of offending the LORD, and of grieving his HOLY SPIRIT, is an incontestible evidence of a Soul being BORN OF GOD.

*I will put my fear in their hearts, (saith the LORD) that they shall not depart from me for ever, and I will not depart from them saith the LORD.* In Malachi it is said, that God had a Book of Remembrance for those that have only *thought upon his NAME*. I think that may be said to be the lowest Token, or evidence mentioned in the Holy Word.

I consider that all who are brought to feel the total depravity of their vile na-

ture, and are constrained to acknowledge, that in their flesh dwelleth no manner of thing that is good, are truly the subjects of Grace.

There are many other true *Tokens*, which the Children of God (certainly) have, which proves to a demonstration, that they are blessed Souls!—Blessed *Jewels!* Yea, blessed *Stones in Zion!* which are engraven upon by the finger of the HOLY-GHOST; and yet they are uncomfortable; they are disconsolate, and uneasy, where-ever they are, by day and by night;—yet these are *blessed of the Lord!*

This brings me to observe, that God's people wish to climb the Ladder of true Experience. They wish to do it by climbing up the glorious DOCTRINES OF GRACE. Here let me observe, that the Children of Grace long to have this true *Token*, namely, an application of the precious BLOOD OF CHRIST to their souls.—The Blood of the LORD JESUS CHRIST was shed for the remission of the sins of his people: Hence the awakened soul cries unto the Lord, *Oh! give me a true*

*Token*, let thy blood be upon my soul : O let it be upon the door-posts of my heart, as the blood of the Paschal Lamb was sprinkled upon the door-posts of the Children of Israel in Egypt. We are informed that all were safe wherever the blood was sprinkled, which was typical of the Blood of the glorious and blessed Redeemer.

There is another thing which may be said to be a true *Token*, viz. The Child of God humbly desireth that he may have some blessed promise sent home to his soul, so that he may feel that he is sealed with the Holy Spirit of Promise to the day of Eternal Redemption. The Lord grant that we may experience what it is to have true *Tokens* from the Lord.

There are other *Tokens* which may be called evidential *Tokens* of a Divine Change, which are all for the declarative Glory of God.

Have I received such visitations from the Lord as to make me humble, patient, and resigned to the Will of God, in whatever station or situation Providence hath placed me ?

Hence the Child of God wishes to be brought into sweet subjection to the will of his covenant God and Father.

The substance of all which I have at this time set before you, from the sacred Text, were delivered to me by my amiable and valuable departed sister in JESUS CHRIST, *SUSANNAH HARBERT*, who was called to change worlds in the twenty-fourth year of her age.

Our transplanted sister set under the preaching of the Gospel in this place for many years, and that with pleasure, profit and edification. I have transcribed a small part of her experience, from her own hand writing, which I shall read, wishing it may be made a blessing to the DAUGHTERS of JERUSALEM.

“ I *SUSANNAH HARBERT*  
 “ have had the invaluable advantage of  
 “ being brought up to hear the Word  
 “ preached, from my youth, under which  
 “ I had frequent though transient con-  
 “ victions ; I say transient, because they  
 “ appeared to me to wear off : But how-  
 “ ever,

“ ever, one Lord’s-Day afternoon Mr.  
“ Clarke spoke on these words,—And  
“ give me a true Token, concerning the  
“ covenant made between Rahab the  
“ Harlot, and the Spies that were sent to  
“ view the Land of Canaan.—The To-  
“ ken that was given to Rahab, was that  
“ of the scarlet line hanging in the win-  
“ dow, which was to be a security for her.  
“ Mr. Clarke considered the scarlet thread  
“ as a type of the Blood of Christ. He  
“ then addressed the unconverted, and  
“ informed them, that if they died stran-  
“ gers to a sense or view of an interest  
“ in the sufferings of the LORD JESUS  
“ CHRIST, and the evidences of the New  
“ Birth, such as prayer, hatred to sin,  
“ mourning on account of iniquity, see-  
“ ing a beauty and comeliness in the  
“ LORD JESUS, and the sanctifying ope-  
“ rations of the Holy Spirit, that if they  
“ died strangers to these tokens, they  
“ never could be saved. I was much  
“ affected during the sermon; I saw I  
“ was a miserable undone sinner, and that  
“ without an interest in the Blood of  
“ Christ

“ Christ I must perish. I really thought  
“ that all that I had heard would rise up  
“ in judgment against me. I saw a beau-  
“ ty in the Blood of Christ; but I was  
“ affraid the Lord would not save such a  
“ vile sinner as me. The next Lord’s  
“ Day Mr. Clarke preached from these  
“ words concerning *Manoah* and his wife,  
“ Judges, xiii. 23. I was somewhat com-  
“ forted under the sermon, for I was en-  
“ abled to believe the Lord had begun a  
“ good work in my soul, for he had dis-  
“ covered unto me my sad depravity,  
“ and that if he had meant to have de-  
“ stroyed me, he would not have given  
“ me to see such things as he had. Also  
“ those words in Malachi, iii. 17. were  
“ very comfortable to my soul. I found  
“ that I was helped to tell the Lord all  
“ my complaints, though I could but  
“ think on his name he had promised to  
“ remember me.”

“ Another precious portion made pro-  
“ fitable to my soul, was out of *John*,  
“ namely, he that cometh to me, I will  
“ in no wise cast out.—also, *Matthew*,  
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“ 4th and 6th; *Psalm*, 84th and 111th;  
“ *Malachi*, 3d and 1st,—thus was I com-  
“ forted, but this comfortable frame  
“ of mind did not continue long, for  
“ the Lord was pleased to withdraw  
“ himself from me, and I was in a dark  
“ frame of mind almost fifteen months, du-  
“ ring which time I was ready to give up  
“ all hope, but it pleased God to give me  
“ this promise, The Lord will give grace  
“ and glory, and no good thing will he  
“ with-hold from them that walk up-  
“ rightly; this promise was comfortable  
“ to me, grace here, and glory in a future  
“ state:—but I was again beset by the  
“ enemy of my soul,—but those words in  
“ *Hebrews* flowed in upon my soul—faith-  
“ ful is he who has called you; then  
“ was I enabled to believe that, that did  
“ belong to me: I again found sin lay as  
“ a burden upon my conscience, and be-  
“ came afraid that I should come short  
“ at last:—but then those words  
“ came unto my soul, Daughter, be of  
“ good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee;  
“ thus was I comforted till I was taken  
ill;

“ ill; my affliction was long, but I was  
 “ assisted to bear with it, believing that  
 “ it was in order to bring me to a know-  
 “ ledge of myself: one night I was much  
 “ distressed, I begged that the Lord  
 “ would be pleased to give me one pro-  
 “ mise more,—the Lord granted my re-  
 “ quest,—I will trust and not be afraid,  
 “ for the Lord Jehovah is my strength  
 “ and my song, he also is become my  
 “ salvation.”

Here was the end of what she left be-  
 hind her. Her intentions were, (if spared)  
 I am fully persuaded, to have gone on in  
 a greater way and manner. A few obser-  
 vations which follow, I think worthy  
 notice: One Lord's day, our young de-  
 parted sister was returning home from  
 hearing the gospel, she said, “ I have  
 “ been in a dark frame of mind under  
 “ the word; but I really approve those  
 “ things which Mr. Clarke delivered;  
 “ for I know that none can apply the  
 “ blessed word, but the Holy Spirit of  
 “ God.” I can truly say, that our de-  
 parted sister was apparently growing up  
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to be a MOTHER in ISRAEL;—the Lord was pleased to give her an hearing ear, so that she did not only hear, but understand.

The voice of strangers she would not follow.—Our sister discovered a partial regard to the true MINISTERS of JESUS CHRIST, especially those who were consistent CALVINISTS. She took great pleasure in reading evangelical compositions, with which she became truly familiar, and was capable of conversing with wisdom and humility, which she did with becoming affability and gravity.—Her dutifulness to her mother was truly amiable; her affections proved to be truly tender. She was careful in striving to give pleasure to her mother who was dear to her in a DOUBLE RELATION; she did not only speak to her as a mother, but also as a sister in CHRIST; she was helped to converse with humility and solemnity on the deep things of God:—She gave earnest attention to the word preached, and kept a regular account of all the transactions of her life that were worthy

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of observation, with remarks on most of the discourses that she had heard, which makes near two volumes:—She had also a sweet turn for divine poetry. About five months past she was again brought into a state of affliction, which she bore with Christian patience, acknowledging the loving kindness of her God; during her sickness she went through a great deal of bodily pain; at one time she said, what is this to what my precious Lord went through for me; at another time she was heard to say, O precious CHRIST! O he is precious! his blood is precious; I asked her, if she had ever been left to murmur against the Lord, under her afflictions? she answered no, further saying that she viewed all her afflictions originating in the wisdom and love of God unto her soul: The last time, I saw her, she told me she had found great consolation from these words, fear not for I am with thee:—She prayed for me that God would please to support me under all my trials, and bless my labours in the ministry, and said it might be but a little time

time but we might meet together; her last words were—trust in Jesus, trust in Jesus, which she repeated several times; it rather appeared that it was to her own soul, exulting in the exercise of faith, thus she fell asleep in the LORD JESUS CHRIST. I believe these were the last words that she said.

*ADDRESS to the mother and sister of the departed child.*—I trust that God will sanctify this bereaving providence unto you; your loss is her eternal gain. Upon a right consideration there is no real cause to mourn, and yet in another point of view, I may say indulge the flowing tears, I know they are tears of love, for one who was so dear to you by nature, and dearer still by that union *relation* that subsisted between you, as members of the *mystical body* of the LORD JESUS. God has been pleased to take away many from this church, and congregation, in the space of eleven years and a few months, that I have been amongst you as an under shepherd. God will sanctify every bereaving providence to you. It is much  
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to be lamented that such numbers of professors are so inconstant; well might the poet, say, "they are more inconstant than the waves," all things in this time-state are fluctuating, and like the fading flower, or withering grass. Genuine friendship in the present day is rare to be found; but, blessed be God, there is a friend who sticketh closer than a brother, even the GLORY-MAN! who is also JEHOVAH-JESUS! who will never leave you, nor forsake you; I, as an individual, do really mourn the loss of our dear sister; her steadfastness in the ways of God; her attachment to my ministry; her unfeigned friendship and humble carriage, rendered her amiable and valuable in my esteem; however the Lord, who hath done all things well, has taken her to himself, and has given her a *crown of righteousness*, which *fadeth not away*. My feelings forbid me to proceed further upon the subject. May the Lord command his blessing upon what has been delivered in weakness, for JESUS CHRIST's sake, Amen and Amen.

The

The following Hymns, which Mr. Clarke inserted in LETTERS of correspondence to the deceased, were made profitable and comfortable to her soul.

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H Y M N I.

I.

**P**OOOR mourning child, here come, disclose,  
Thy deep complaints, thy various woes,  
Approach, 'tis Jesus, he can heal,  
The pains and wounds which thou dost feel.

II.

Helpless and vile, in thy own eyes,  
A Saviour, he can bid thee rise,  
Can mingle love, with briny tears,  
And banish all thy needless fears.

III.

He pities all his mourning ones,  
He makes their sighs, and plaintive groans,  
And heals, with blood, the pungent smart,  
And shews to such his loving heart.

H Y M N

## H Y M N II.

## I.

**B**EFORE the world's foundation laid,  
 My debt was view'd as really paid  
 With gushing streams of blood!  
 Chosen in Christ, a virgin pure,  
 And balm provided for my cure,  
 Before I fell from God.

## II.

The sum of all my crimson sins,  
 And all my horrid scarlet stains,  
 Which on my conscience lay,  
 A glorious and propitious God  
 Did blot them out with hallow'd blood,  
 And put them all away.



F I N I S.